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Subject: Concerns & recommendations - May 25 EPA SJRWP open house
Date: Tuesday, May 03, 2016 10:55:57 AM
Attachments: [removed.txt](#)

Dear Donn, Gary, Carlos, Sam and Valmichael-

GBF appreciates that the EPA is now holding quarterly public events regarding the SJRWP. However, from working with the community on SJRWP last 5 years, I have concerns about the efficacy and efficiency of using an open house format as the sole method of disseminating information on May 25th. In short, I think you will end up with frustrated community members and agency/organization staff if we do not have brief presentation(s) that provide a status update of the cleanup and the attendees do not have the opportunity to hear Q&A all at the same time. I think it would be inefficient to have EPA and others who are exhibiting (Harris County, TDSHS, etc.) having to answer the same questions from community members over and over.

The presentations that Gary has given at the last two EPA public events were VERY helpful. Please do not stray from that format. It did help that there was a facilitator and ground rules. I think most folks will want to hear from EPA on the cleanup status, but perhaps Harris County, TDSHS or other agencies can give brief updates on their related work (water well sampling, seafood advisories) if warranted.

I highly recommend that this event have a short presentation session to provide updates on the following items, and perhaps other items that members of the CAC think would be useful, followed by a structured Q&A session:

- Cap inspection results
- Any follow up findings on the cause of the hole in the cap found in December, and how long it may have been there
- Water, sediment, biota sampling results
- Corps 3rd party review status and findings
- FS updates including any new clean up alternatives, e.g. alternatives with best available practices/BMPs that isolate the site from the river
- FS/proposed plan for cleanup/comment period timeline updates

I think the one-on-one can be very good as far as folks being able to get opportunity to follow up with EPA or other agency staff if they had additional questions or did not understand the answers that were given, but I think it would be inefficient as the primary source of info dissemination and will cause community frustration as mentioned above.



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I imagine one item of which you are concerned is Q&A. I get very frustrated when people ask about non-relevant items, don't follow the ground rules, engage in inappropriate behavior and shouting, etc. but I still believe that Q&A has more upside than downside if properly facilitated. I prefer oral an Q&A format, but if needed perhaps written questions and oral answers could suffice.

If the public notice language now legally precludes you from doing formal presentations, then a structured Q&A session might reduce community frustration.

Finally, I think that our having a CAC meeting before May 25 would be very helpful in sharing community concerns/ideas for the EPA public meeting/open house agenda/methodology. If that can't happen, I recommend that EPA solicit ideas and comments from all CAC members on meeting topics/methodology via email. All that said, I think a face-to-face CAC meeting even if it can't happen until the day of the event, is warranted.

Thanks-
Scott

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